The Diocese of Utah

Customary for the Visitation of the Bishop

The Right Reverend Phyllis Spiegel

Effective May 20, 2025

Rooted in Jesus · Joyous in Discipleship · Abundant in Spirit

Dear Friends in Christ,

The annual pastoral visitation is a sacred rhythm in our common life. It echoes the deep roots we share in Jesus—gathering as one Body, breaking bread, offering prayers, and renewing our commitment to the apostles' teaching. It is not merely a moment for the bishop to "drop in," but rather a living sign of our mutual covenant as the Episcopal Diocese of Utah: a people rooted in Jesus, joyous in discipleship, and abundant in Spirit.

As I travel across our beautiful state—whether to a desert chapel, a mountain parish, or a city congregation—I come with deep joy. I come not simply to lead worship, but to be with you, to witness God's work in your midst, and to strengthen the spiritual connections that bind us together.

Visitation Sundays are opportunities for holy joy and connection. Worship, teaching, conversation, and service can all be woven into our time together. With the Bishop's Mobile Office (RV), we now have the blessing of lingering longer, offering extended presence when desired. Even if your church is close to the diocesan center, I welcome invitations for extended visits over a day or weekend. While we may not reach every corner for an overnight each year, we will grow in relationship over time.

If your community would like to include a hike, picnic, community walk, prayerful gathering with civic leaders, or a local outreach opportunity—something that reflects your discipleship and spiritual abundance—please share those hopes with Monica Daly, my Executive Assistant and we will try to make it happen. These experiences deepen our shared joy and witness to the Good News we proclaim.

It is a sacred privilege to serve with you. I look forward to each visitation with a grateful and expectant heart.

With every blessing,

+Bp. Phyllis Spiegel

TO PREPARE FOR THE VISIT

Confirm with the bishop's office two weeks in advance the services the bishop will be taking, the times, and if there are options, the lectionary for the day.

On Sunday morning, these are some activities she can be asked to do:

1. Teach on a particular subject: upcoming liturgical season, future of the church, forgiveness in an unforgiving world, discipleship, etc.
2. Speak about the Diocesan Vitality Work.
3. Host a Question and Answer time - sometimes called Stump the Bishop.
4. Lead a Bible Study.
5. Post-sermon discussion

Other ideas can be requested. **These additional options should be arranged well in advance of the visitation.**

NEW - The bishop is meeting with Vestries/Bishop Committee's on the Tuesday prior to the visitation. This can be done in person or on Zoom. The time is negotiable based on the schedules of the attendees. This allows for the bishop to be fully available for the fellowship time on Sunday. The conversation is generally an hour in length, and the bishop will facilitate the conversation. If Tuesday evening before the visitation is not viable, please make arrangements for another time as soon as possible. It is ok, but not preferable, if this meeting must fall after the visitation.

NEW - The bishop's Ex. Assistant will send a form prior to the visitation for you to express hopes/ideas for the bishop's time during the visitation.

NEW - Given the passing of B001 at GC2024, those who wish to include a statement on Creation Care in the Baptismal Covenant are welcome to do so. If you choose this option, please teach on this addition PRIOR to the visitation, to both the candidates and the congregation. Here are two options as suggested by the Creation Care Caucus.
Option 1: *Will you strive for justice and peace among all, and respect the dignity of the Earth and of every human being?*

I will, with God's help.

Option 2: *Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?*

I will, with God's help.

Note: Option 1 replaces the current language of the charge referenced and Option 2 would follow that same charge and be an addition. At the next GC, the Standing Committee for Liturgy and Music may offer other options which we will consider at that time.

Please send the bulletin draft no later than Wednesday prior to the visitation. It will be returned with comments by Friday morning, or earlier if the bulletin arrives at the first of the week. Out of both tradition and as an act of creation care, the bishop prefers to use the BCP rather than have a full text bulletin. (*See Pastoral Letter on Communion Practices 2023)* The exception to this is in settings where a great number of guests are expected and a full bulletin is an act of hospitality.

Do not print text for the 'Benediction and Blessing', instead list in the bulletin as such. The bishop customizes this weekly to emphasize, when possible, the lessons of the day.

The bishop will serve as the officiant and celebrant, and if children are present will have a Children's Message as a part of the sermon.

The clergy or a Warden is asked to make the announcements. The bishop will do the invitation to the table.

New: As the bishop is beginning to travel with individuals in the ordination process, she may not always need a chaplain. Feel free to reach out to Monica if you have not been specifically notified as to the need for a Bishop's Chaplain.

It is always nice to have a time of fellowship at some point during the morning. Receptions are not expected, but are quite appropriate if celebrating confirmations/baptisms. Simple coffee and tea service, or customary offerings, are sufficient for "regular Sundays". In other words, the bishop appreciates what is offered but has no expectations. The bishop's Executive Assistant will provide a list of the bishop's food allergies if that is helpful.

The bishop will arrive one hour prior to the service, and 45 minutes prior to teaching a class that is before worship. When the bulletin is sent, please include instructions about parking if there is anything in particular to know.

BAPTISMS AND CONFIRMATIONS - Please include the names of all in the Prayers of the People at least two weeks prior to the Pastoral Visitation as well as during the time of their formal formation (Inquirer's/Confirmation Classes).

The form for the reporting of Confirmations will be sent to the parish administrator and should be returned to Monica Daly.

The bishop will apply the chrism at a baptism, but if clergy are present, it is appropriate for the priest to perform the baptism. However, if preferred by the clergy or baptismal families, the bishop will gladly baptize. If chrism is customary in your church for confirmations, please let the bishop know when she arrives.

In the announcements inviting people to baptism and confirmation, the bishop encourages congregations to include an invitation for those who wish to change their name from the name given to them at baptism. This is referenced in the Policy on Alternate Liturgies. If used, the changing of a name should be placed prior to the baptisms.

If there are confirmations, please use the liturgy in the BCP or from *Confirm Not Conform* if that formation program has been used for formation. (If the latter is used, please be in consultation with the bishop's office a month in advance.) If you are unfamiliar with the Confirmation service layout, the bishop's office can provide a bulletin template.

If there are more than four confirmands, please provide each candidate with an index card that has their preferred first name printed in large letters which they will hold in front of them when they kneel/stand before the bishop. The bishop prefers to confirm at the rail, but if that is not possible, she will sit in the bishop's chair with the confirmand kneeling on a cushion or standing.

Baptismal and Confirmation certificates are customary and can be signed by the bishop either prior to her visit, if someone wishes to bring them to her office, or on the day of the visitation. She will also sign any BCP's gifted to the confirmands. (The BCP economy edition is particularly appropriate for confirmands.)

The church register needs to be filled out with all of the baptismal/confirmand entries and put out for the bishop to sign. The service register should also be up to date and available for review.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Please see the *Pastoral Letter on Communion Practices 2023* for detailed information regarding the distribution of communion.

It is proper to bless an accurate number of wafers and amount of wine for the size of the day's congregation. The reserved sacrament should be enough to serve the needs for Communion Under Special Circumstances by Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEV's) or clergy between services of Holy Eucharist. The most efficient way of communicating an accurate count to the celebrant is for the ushers to complete a slip of paper with the following information and to bring it forward with the bread and the wine as the deacon/priest begins setting the table:

Date:

Number Present:

# of Gluten Free (if known)

(Congregations are highly encouraged to adopt a method of communicating the count to the deacon/celebrant for all Holy Eucharist services prior to the table being set.)

As the bishop is highly gluten intolerant, please do not use real bread for visitation Sundays, though wheat wafers are fine. If you do not have GF wafers, the bishop travels with her own supply, but **please ask an altar guild member to ask her for a GF wafer when she arrives to be placed at the altar.**

The bishop needs to sign the Service Register, and the Parish Register if there are baptisms/confirmations, and it is helpful for the cleric or some other appointed person

to facilitate the signing. The bishop is often engaged in many conversations and does not want to leave without signing in the appropriate places.

The bishop's office is here to serve you so please ask for any directions or assistance needed to facilitate a well ordered and enjoyable visitation.